

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 AID-10 RSR-01

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R 280701Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6477

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 15487

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO DAO (AOSOP-OR) SAIGON,
USSAG NAKHON PHANOM FROM CAN THO AUG 27 BEING REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE CAN THO 679

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MARR, MOPS, HU, ID, PLS, VS

SUBJECT: MR IV SITREP FOR AUGUST 27, 1973, ALSO SUMMARIZING WEEK OF
AUGUST 20-26

SUMMARY: ELECTION DAY PASSED RELATIVELY PEACEFULLY IN THE DELTA.
THE ICCS REGION VII INDONESIAN CHIEF RULES ON THE SAFETY OF HIS
SUBREGIONAL TEAM SITES. SLATES ONE AND TWO PREVAIL AMIDST HIGH
VOTER PARTICIPATION AND LOW ENTHUSIASM. VINH BINH VC ESTABLISH
A NEW HAMLET, SEEK TO GUARANTEE RICE SUPPLIES. CHAU DOC
HOSTED A HIGH KHMER PERSONAGE. END SUMMARY.

1. SECURITY SITUATION: (A) M R IV REPORTED 38 ALLEGED
VC/NVA CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS AUGUST 24, OF WHICH 17 TOOK PLACE
IN DINH TUONG. RVNAF LOST TEN KILLED AND 66 WOUNDED AND
CLAIMED 64 VC/NVA DEAD. WE WERE UNABLE TO OBTAIN INCIDENT
AND CASUALTY FIGURES FOR AUGUST 25. THE DELTA SAW 44 INCIDENTS
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ON ELECTION DAY, AUGUST 26, ACCORDING TO MR IV AUTHORITIES.

16 OF THESE OCCURRED IN DINH TUONG, CONCENTRATED IN SAM GIANG AND CAI LAY DISTRICTS. GVN LOSSES INCLUDED NINE KILLED AND 72 WOUNDED. TEN VC/NVA WERE REPORTED KILLED.

(B) GVN AUTHORITIES REPORTED 220 VC/NRI INCIDENTS DURING THE WEEK OF AUGUST 20-26. UP SOMEWHAT FROM THE PREVIOUS WEEK'S 195. AMONG THESE WERE 27 GROUND ATTACKS, 137 ATTACKS BY FIRE, 45 HARASSMENTS, THREE INFILTRATIONS AND EIGHT ACTS OF SABOTAGE AND TERRORISM. RVNAF SUFFERED 116 KILLED, 577 WOUNDED AND 24 MISSING, WHILE THE NVA/VC LOST 459 KILLED AND SEVEN CAPTURED. GVN CASUALTIES WERE SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN THE PREVIOUS WEEK, BUT REPORTED NVA/VC LOSSES WERE ALMOST 30 PERCENT HIGHER.

(C) THREE PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND ELVEN WOUNDED AUGUST 24 WHEN A BUS TRAVELLING FROM BA CHUC TO TINH BIEN, CHAU DOC PROVINCE, RAN OVER A MINE AT 1040 HOURS. THE BUS WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED.

2. ICCS: (A) THE MY THO VICE CONSUL REPORTS THAT THE CHIEF REGION VI ICCS INDONESIAN DELEGATE WENT TO SAIGON AUGUST 27 TO ATTEND WHAT HE CALLED AN EMERGENCY MEETING AT HIS HEAD-QUARTERS THERE. HE DECLINED TO STATE THE REASON.

(B) ICCS REGION VII INDONESIAN CHIEF COL ISMULJONO TOLD THE CONSUL GENERAL AUGUST 24 THAT HIS SUPERIORS IN SAIGON HAVE GIVEN HIM THE AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT SUBREGIONAL INDONESIAN TEAMS SHOULD WITHDRAW OR REMAIN IN PLACE. ISMULJONO IS RESISTING POLISH AND HUNGARIAN SUGGESTIONS TO WITHDRAW FROM VI THANH AND QUANG LONG ON THE GROUNDS OF INSUFFICIENT SECURITY (CAN THO 0673). ISMULJONO INSPECTED THE VI THANH ICCS COMPOUND AUGUST 24 AND DECIDED THAT IT WAS SAFE TO REMAIN. HE PLANS TO PERSONALLY SURVEY QUANG LONG AUGUST 27.

3. GVN ACTIVITIES: SENATE ELECTION PASSED PEACEFULLY AND PREDICTABLY IN THE DELTA AUGUST 26. THERE WERE ONLY TWO REPORTED INCIDENTS OF POSSIBLE VC INTERFERENCE: IN CHUONG THIEN AUTHORITIES DISCOVERED AND DISARMED AN EXPLOSIVE CHARGE HIDDEN IN A BALLOT BOX; IN KIEN HOA, A SNIPER FIRED A FEW

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ROUNDS AT A POLLING PLACE. MR IV AUTHORITIES CLAIMED THAT 95 PERCENT OF THE ELIGIBLE VOTERS PARTICIPATED, EXCEEDING MGEN NGUYEN VINH NGHI'S GOAL OF 90 PER CENT. GO CONG, CHAU DOC, AND KIEN PHONG REPORTED TURNOUTS EXCEEDING 99 PER CENT; HOA-HAO DOMINATED AN GIANG EXPERIENCED THE LOWEST PARTICIPATION,

88 PER CENT. AS EXPECTED, SLATES ONE AND TWO PREVAILED. DAN CHU RECEIVED 82.94 PER CENT OF THE VOTE, AND THE

WHITE ELEPHANT 70.6 PER CENT. SLATE THREE OBTAINED 12.4 PER CENT AND SLATE FOUR 10.67 PER CENT. (COMMENT: WHEN WE ASKED OUR VIETNAMESE SECRETARY TO CALL CORPS HEADQUARTERS FOR ELECTIONS INFORMATION, SHE ASKED, "WHAT ELECTIONS?" FURTHER QUESTIONING REVEALED SHE WAS INDEED IGNORANT THAT ELECTIONS TOOK PLACE SUNDAY. END COMMENT).

4. VC ACTIVITIES: (A) VINH BINH RD CADRE RECENTLY REPORTED THE EXISTENCE OF A NEW VC HAMLET IN MY LONG VILLAGE, CAU NGANG DISTRICT. GVN OFFICIALS ADMIT THAT THIS AREA HAS BEEN BEYOND THEIR CONTROL FOR SOME TIME. THE RED CADRE SAID THE VC HAMLET HAS ALMOST 4000 PEOPLE, A NEW ROAD, AND MANY NEW BUILDINGS. PROVINCE AUTHORITIES PLAN TO INSPECT THE AREA BY HELICOPTER IN THE MORNING OF AUGUST 28.

(B) VINH BINH SOURCES REPORTED TWO VC GAMBITS TO CIRCUMVENT GVN CONTROLS ON RICE DISTRIBUTION. THE VC ORDERED A SMALL MILL BUILT IN EACH DISTRICT SO THEY COULD MILL THEIR OWN RICE. ONE SUCH MILL IS REPORTED ALREADY OPERATING IN LONG TOAN DISTRICT. TOO, THE VC ARE TYRING TO COLLECT A BUSHEL OF RICE FROM EVERY FIVE FAMILIES IN THE PROVINCE. APPARENTLY THEY REASON THAT MANY COLLECTIONS OF MINUTE AMOUNTS WILL MORE EASILY ESCAPE GVN DETECTION.

5. MISCELLANEOUS: THE CHAU DOC VICE CONSUL REPORTS THAT KHMER LEADER SON NGOC THANH VISITED CHAU DOC CITY AND TINH BIEN DISTRICT ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO. THANH, THE BROTHER OF GVN SENATOR SON THAI NGUYEN, FOR YEARS FOUGHT TO DEPOSE PRINCE SIHANOUK AND, AFTER SIHANOUK'S FALL, PARTICIPATED IN THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT. HIS MAIN CONTRIBUTION WAS THE RECRUITING OF VIETNAMESE KHMER SOLDIERS TO FIGHT IN CAMBODIA. THERE ARE NOW PERSISTENT RUMORS THAT THANH IS AGAIN RECRUITING. THE CHAU DOC VICE CONSUL SAID THE STATED REASON FOR THANH'S CONFIDENTIAL

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TINH BIEN TRIP WAS TO VISIT THE KHMER REFUGEES THERE AND TO SEE RELATIVES. HE ADDED THAT THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING TO INDICATE HE DID ANY RECRUITING.

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